

Report on the Units

January 2008

3872/7872/MS/R/08J

OCR (Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations) is a unitary awarding body, established by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate and the RSA Examinations Board in January 1998. OCR provides a full range of GCSE, A level, GNVQ, Key Skills and other qualifications for schools and colleges in the United Kingdom, including those previously provided by MEG and OCEAC. It is also responsible for developing new syllabuses to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers.

This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this Report.

© OCR 2008

Any enquiries about publications should be addressed to:

OCR Publications
PO Box 5050
Annesley
NOTTINGHAM
NG15 0DL

Telephone: 0870 770 6622
Facsimile: 01223 552610
E-mail: publications@ocr.org.uk

CONTENTS

Advanced GCE Music 7872

Advanced Subsidiary GCE Music 3872

REPORT ON THE UNITS

Chief Examiner's Report	1
2552 Introduction to Historical Study (Written Examination)	3
2555 Historical and Analytical Studies	11
Grade Thresholds	14

Chief Examiner's Report

General Comments

It is clear that the availability of Units 2552 and 2555 in January affords Centres and candidates a valued opportunity either to sit for a GCE Unit after only one term of study, or to resit a Unit in order to improve on an earlier performance that was perhaps less strong than had been anticipated. Whatever the case, entry for January Units places significant responsibilities on both Centres and candidates to ensure that those who attempt the January papers are prepared thoroughly in the relatively short period of time between June and the following January.

Evidence seen by Examiners this session has suggested that, while many candidates do produce performances that represent a significant improvement on earlier results in the same Unit, there are many candidates at both AS and A2 levels who appear to be worryingly unprepared to meet the demands of the papers.

At AS level the most important factor that frequently determines overall performance is a candidate's level of familiarity with the prescribed repertoire. The selection of prescribed repertoire always follows the sequence of the previous June session, and therefore represents an opportunity for a genuine resit without having to cover new material. However, candidates are unlikely to improve significantly on an earlier performance without deeper and more rigorous study of this important aspect of the course. As the reports below make clear, Examiners are extremely concerned by the number of candidates who produce high scores on the "unprepared" material of **Section A** but then show little more than a passing knowledge of the prescribed material that should have been prepared diligently before the examination in **Section B**.

At A2 level, January entry for Unit 2555 encourages Centres and candidates to undertake thorough investigation of the prescribed topic for **Section B** early in the course. It also means that Centres following this entry pattern need to plan detailed study of a body of repertoire covering the Area of Study Words and Music in the Autumn term. This study can provide candidates with extremely valuable preparation for other aspects of the course (for example, skills related to the setting of text in a vocal commission for Unit 2554, or study of interpretative detail related to the Performance Investigation and/or recital performance in Unit 2555). However, in order for candidates to cover a suitable range of material and acquire a sufficient range of skills and knowledge to achieve success in Unit 2555, much of the Autumn term's work will need to be targeted at the requirements of this Unit rather than spread equally across all the A2 Units. Without this additional emphasis on aspects of historical and analytical study it is unlikely that most candidates will be sufficiently prepared to tackle the demands of the Unit by January.

The new OCR A-level Music specification is now in schools and Centres should have received publicity material relating to this, together with a CD containing both the specification and specimen assessment materials.

The new specification has generated considerable interest, both from Centres already working in partnership with OCR and also from Centres keen to experience the OCR A-level Music specification for the first time.

The new specification builds heavily on the success of the current Music specification, and it is hoped that Centres following the present OCR specification will discover much that is already familiar to them as they read through the new documentation.

Report on the Units/Components taken in January 2008

In terms of the current January GCE Units, the new Unit G353 (old AS Unit 2552) will see relatively minor changes, but there will be more significant changes from the old A2 Unit 2555 to the new Unit G356. These changes have been designed to respond to many of the points raised in consultations with candidates, teachers, Centres and Examiners over the past eighteen months. Material relating to the new specification is also available on the OCR website.

2552 Introduction to Historical Study (Written Examination)

General Comments

Scripts for this Unit covered a wide range of ability this session, but all candidates were able to receive credit for the demonstration of appropriate skills and knowledge related to historical study in music. The mark scheme allows a degree of flexibility in terms of candidate response, and the general guidance given to Examiners instructs them to award evidence that demonstrates accuracy in terms of its aural perception.

Again this year, Examiners expressed concern at the number of candidates who appeared to be under-prepared for the demands of the paper. Centres and candidates are reminded that the standard of the January paper is exactly equivalent to that of the June paper: it is not an “easy option” and success demands rigorous and detailed preparation in addition to attentive listening in the examination session.

In many cases, a strong performance in the “unprepared” **Section A** (with answers demonstrating high levels of accuracy in terms of aural perception and stylistic understanding) often tended to be followed by a much weaker performance in **Section B**, where details of the prescribed repertoire should have been prepared in detail beforehand and learned thoroughly.

It is disheartening for Examiners to see many otherwise able candidates leave questions in **Section B** unanswered. The strategy will always result in a zero mark for an unanswered question, and this drags down the overall total for the Unit. Answers to several questions in this section can be gleaned from evidence in the printed score extract or in the recorded jazz extract, but some questions will draw on broader contextual knowledge that can be acquired only as a result of detailed study (in relation to both score and recordings of the music) of the prescribed repertoire.

Teacher Tips for the Unit

- Ensure that candidates are encouraged to listen to the music recordings on the CD. Answers need to be based on the aural evidence in Section A, not on assumptions made prior to listening. They have 5 minutes' preparation time (with access to the question paper and insert) to do this before the examination begins.
- Ensure that candidates prepare material on all THREE prescribed orchestral scores AND all THREE jazz recordings for the Unit. A gambling strategy here is dangerous and can lead to serious under-performance in the Unit (as mentioned in previous Examiners' Reports).
- Practice essays can provide useful opportunities for candidates to develop strategies for using their repertoire knowledge to address specific questions. Without appropriate focus, candidates' answers cannot access the highest mark bands.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A

Extract 1A SCHUBERT, *String quartet in d, D.810* (“*Death and the Maiden*”), 2nd movement, bars 1-24, 25-31, 33-48, 50 & 169-180. Melos Quartett (1975), Deutsche Grammophon 463 156-2, track 6, 00’24” – 01’37”, 02’49” – 03’09”, 03’49” – 04’30” & 13’02” – 13’53”
[Total length of recorded extracts: 02’55”]

- 1 Although many candidates answered this relatively basic question accurately, Examiners were surprised that a significant minority of candidates chose options other than “chordal” as the answer.
- 2 Most scripts placed the *crescendo* accurately in **2(a)**, but many were less successful in identifying the location of the more complex dynamic progression given in **2(b)**.
- 3 Most candidates were able to locate chords **I** and **V** accurately, but the placing of other chords caused difficulties. Examiners were encouraged that most candidates identified the location of chord **Ic**, but there was some confusion between the placing of chords **IV** and **VI**. Aural attentiveness would have made differentiation easier for candidates, with chord **VI** having a clearly identifiable major sound.
- 4 Almost all candidates identified the perfect cadence accurately at **(a)**, although many failed to recognise that the cadence at **(b)** was imperfect.
- 5 The majority of candidates correctly identified the key relationship as that of the relative major, although a smaller number of candidates were able to identify the tonal centre precisely as B \flat major.
- 6 Examiners were delighted to see an overall improvement in the accuracy of melodic dictation this session, and many candidates gave completely accurate answers to this question. The most frequent errors related to omitted accidentals (C \sharp in bar 21 and, more frequently, E \flat in bar 22).
- 7 Most candidates were able to place the ornamentation accurately, although several scripts ringed incorrectly the second note (B \flat) in bar 23. Most candidates recognised the ornament as a turn, but Examiners also saw a considerable number of scripts that gave “mordent” or “trill” as an answer.
- 8 Examiners were delighted that many candidates gave completely accurate answers to this question, which contained some difficult interval leaps. It is to be hoped that the improvement in accuracy of melody writing demonstrated this session will be maintained.
- 9 Almost all candidates identified the playing technique accurately as *pizzicato*.
- 10 Many candidates were able to identify the most obvious similarities and differences between the two passages, although very few answers received the maximum credit as a result of duplication of points: for example, several scripts gave “same chord sequence” and “similar harmonic base” as evidence of similarity. Relatively few answers mentioned less obvious differences such as the triplet accompaniment figuration in **Passage 1ii**, or the use of arpeggio figuration over a wide range in the violin’s melodic line.
- 11 Many candidates gave appropriate points of musical evidence in answer to this question, with the most popular observations relating to the dynamic level and the slow tempo of the passage. The more perceptive answers noted the greater sense of major tonality and the repeated perfect cadences that occurred at the end of **Passage 1iii**.

Extract 1B **RON GOODWIN, *The Trap* (no score available), No orchestra specified / Goodwin (1966), Label X Europe LXE 708, track 1, 00'12" – 01'12", track 11 (Variations on Main Theme), 00'00" – 00'28" & 01'00" – 01'26"**
[Total length of recorded extracts: 01'54"]

- 12 (a) Most candidates made reference to the two-bar phrase units, and many mentioned the use of an anacrusis. More perceptive candidates described aspects of melodic repetition that occurred within the various parts of the passage, while some noted the extension of material in the "B" section of the overall ABAC structure. Examiners also credited references to the extended notes that occurred at the end of each phrase unit.
- 12 (b) Many candidates gave "trumpets" or "trombones" as an answer, failing to perceive the distinct quality of the (french) horns playing the melody.
- 13 This was answered accurately by almost all candidates, with many answers receiving full marks. The underlying harmonic base of the passage was well understood by most candidates.
- 14 This question was answered accurately by many candidates. The most frequent errors occurred in bar 7, where not all intervals (especially the initial falling 3rd) were measured with precision. Some candidates recovered from this error by working back from the end of the phrase, recognising the octave leap at the end of the section to be written into the score.
- 15 Most candidates mentioned a change of key, and many identified the new tonal centre (D major) or gave the transposition interval (a 6th). Some answers referred to the higher pitch of the melody or contrasted the performance by the violins with the previous statement played by the horns.
- 16 (a) Examiners were surprised that many candidates failed to locate the notes joined by a *glissando* accurately, often circling pitches well away from those where this technique was used.
- 16 (b) This question was not answered well, with many candidates placing the square bracket over far too large a section of the melody. Careful listening at to the passage would have made clear the precise starting and ending points of the melodic doubling in parallel 3rds.
- 17 Many candidates identified the new tonal centre accurately as A major (the dominant key).
- 18 Almost all candidates answered this question accurately.
- 19 This question was not answered well, with many candidates failing to provide specific musical detail in their answers. Although many scripts referred to the violins' inverted pedal, relatively few answers mentioned the characteristic *tremolo* sound at this point in the extract, or the prominent aural effect of the "open" interval of a 5th.
- 20 Previous Examiners' reports have identified description of musical texture as an area in which many candidates appear to be well adrift in terms of their preparedness to identify relevant musical material to address this aspect of music. Examiners were extremely disappointed that many scripts simply failed to mention any aspect of texture in answer to this question. Several candidates went into great detail describing aspects of instrumentation, but this was not relevant to the question. Examiners had been hoping that candidates would draw attention to the basic two-part nature of the texture (a melody line above drone accompaniment) or to the fact that this texture remained unchanged throughout the passage. Examiners also credited mention of the absence of a low bass line at this point in the music.

- 21 Many candidates identified the imperfect cadence accurately, although Examiners saw a large number of scripts that gave "Perfect" as the chosen answer option.
- 22 Examiners were pleased that some candidates received full marks for their answers to this question. The most common errors related to an inability to perceive the falling 5th at the start of bar 34 or to recognise the following chromatic ascent to the dominant.
- 23 (a) This section of the question required candidates to concentrate on the nature of the melodic line, but many answers focussed entirely on instrumentation. Relatively few candidates demonstrated the degree of perception required to mention the lack of an extended note duration in the final phrase of the passage, the two-note anacrusis or the overlap of melodic phrases at the end of bar 31.
- 23 (b) Most candidates contrasted the major and minor tonal centres, although relatively few scripts identified key centres precisely. Some candidates noted the aural effectiveness of major/minor juxtaposition in **Passage 1iii**, while a number compared the contrast between **Passage 1i** and **Passage 1iii** (major and minor respectively) with the minor opening moving to a major tonal centre in **Passage 1iii**.
- 23 (c) Many candidates referred to antiphonal exchanges between instrumental groups, and several answers gave the correct strings/brass sequence in answer to this question. Only a few scripts followed the instruction to address aspects of texture, with a focus on the homophonic nature of the music at this point in the extract.

Teacher Tips for Section A

- **DO encourage candidates to listen carefully to the recorded music. The 5 minutes of preparation time with the CD recording, question paper and insert before the examination proper begins can be a valuable time for candidates to focus on the overall sound and structure of each extract.**
- **DO remind candidates that answers should not be completed on the basis of score evidence alone; this can mislead candidates (e.g. in the case of key signatures). Only careful listening will confirm the tonality of the music.**
- **DO try to cover both options in the A section: covering only one of the styles will restrict candidates' choices in the examination itself.**
- **DO ensure that candidates have opportunities to practice working through previous examples of Section A questions and skeleton scores for this Unit before the real examination. Past papers and mark schemes are available via the OCR website.**
- **DO encourage precision in terms of candidates' use of language: an increase in *tempo* (pulse) is not the same thing as using shorter rhythmic values, for example. At AS level candidates are expected to articulate sophisticated aural responses with precision and accuracy in order to access the highest mark bands.**

Section B

Extract 2 **SCHUBERT, *Symphony in b* (“*Unfinished*”), D.759, 1st movement, bar 110b to bar 146.**

- 24 This question was answered well by most candidates with only the explanation of *fz* appearing to cause any problems.
- 25 (a) Many candidates identified the tonal centre correctly as e minor, although many gave “b minor” as an answer, betraying a lack of awareness of the sound of the printed extract, where the B major chord serves as a dominant preparation for the music to settle in e minor.
- 25 (b) Answers generally demonstrated candidates’ familiarity with the printed extract as an aural experience: those who knew the passage as a result of repeated listening found it easy to identify the perfect cadence underlying the section, with a dominant 7th chord leading onto a tonic chord. Many answers failed to explain the harmony, focusing instead on basic descriptions of the notes being played by individual instruments.
- 26 Most candidates were able to answer this question accurately. The most common error was the omission of a # on the 2nd clarinet part in bar 4.
- 27 This question required candidates to focus specifically on the nature of the theme that began in bar 5 of the printed extract. Many answers failed to show ways in which this important theme differed from its original statement (at the start of the 1st movement). Examiners were looking for far more detail than a basic description of the instruments playing this theme.
- 28 Harmonic understanding was tested in this question, but many answers provided irrelevant details of instrumentation. The most common feature mentioned in answers was the use of chromatic notes in the melodic line and the fact that these clashed with the pedal bass. Perceptive candidates noted rising chromaticism in the bass line and/or the use of melodic *appoggiaturas* to confuse the sense of tonal centre.
- 29 Most candidates referred to imitation or antiphony in their answers but relatively few scripts mentioned the more perceptive feature of canonic writing. (Examiners credited references to “round” here.)
- 30 Answers to this question were disappointing. Most candidates provided little more than a basic description (section by section) of the printed extract. The question required candidates to consider the aural effectiveness of the instrumentation. In order to answer questions such as this effectively, candidates need to be familiar with the prescribed repertoire not just as a printed score, but also as an aural experience. Consistent and attentive listening to the prescribed repertoire is the most effective preparation for this type of task.
- 31 Most candidates were aware of the overall sonata-form structure of the movement, although many were unable to place the printed extract accurately as the opening section of the development.

Extract 3 **MILES DAVIS, *So What* (1959), from *Kind of Blue*, Columbia Legacy / Sony Music CK 64935, track 1, 07'05" – 08'03"**
[Length of recorded extract: 00'58"]

- 32 (a) Several scripts gave "Miles Davis" in answer to this question, but most candidates were aware that Bill Evans was the soloist in the recorded extract.
- (b) Most answers referred to the chordal nature of the piano writing in the extract, and the most perceptive answers mentioned other relevant detail such as the use of "cluster" chords, a melodic line in the left hand and the use of parallel 2nd dissonances.
- (c) Antiphony and walking bass were the most popular features identified by candidates, but Examiners also credited references to a walking bass and/or syncopation and pushing the beat.
- (d) Most candidates mentioned the presence of the *So What* chords in the brass and reeds, and some answers provided more detail by recording their use as "punctuation" at the end of piano phrases. Most answers referred to the percussion keeping time or playing on the beat, but relatively few candidates noted the use of wire brushes on the cymbal or the presence of a rim shot on the 4th beat of the bar.
- 33 This question tended to identify those candidates who knew the prescribed recording well. The most popular detail mentioned by candidates was the use of the characteristic *So What* chords, but detailed answers also mentioned use of the dorian mode, the presence of a walking bass, or the mirroring of antiphony characteristic of the initial statement of the main theme.
- 34 Most candidates knew that a return of the main theme followed the recorded extract, and candidates who knew the prescribed recording well were able to write convincingly about the performance error in the double bass line which failed to provide the expected return of the initial pick-up motif.

Teacher Tips for Section B

(Most points are observations from previous reports that remain valid)

- **DO make study of the prescribed repertoire a regular part of preparation for the Unit. It is important that candidates get to know the music thoroughly.**
- **DO help candidates to find their way around scores, especially in the early stages of the AS course. It is important that candidates gain confidence in handling the printed scores of prescribed orchestral repertoire.**
- **DO ensure that candidates listen to the prescribed works as regularly as possible: candidates need to appreciate the music as sound, not just as notes on the page.**
- **DO NOT leave preparation of the prescribed repertoire until the last minute; this will not help candidates to become thoroughly familiar with the music they need to study.**
- **DO NOT gamble on any particular item of the prescribed repertoire appearing in 'rotation'. Any item may appear at any stage within the arrangements published in the specification and on the OCR website.**
- **DO NOT forget that the prescribed repertoire changes regularly. Consult the OCR website for the prescribed repertoire relevant to any particular session of this Unit.**

Section C

Candidates' answers ranged over all the questions this session, although relatively few candidates attempted **Question 39**. Examiners noted the continuing focus on relevant contextual issues rather than repetition of musical detail gleaned from the printed scores and/or recordings. Contextual understanding is an important feature of **Section C** of the Unit and preparation for this part of the examination should widen candidates' perspectives to include broader consideration of the prescribed music's place in history.

Candidates must use their knowledge to answer a specific question in order to gain access to the highest mark bands. Basic demonstration of knowledge is not enough; there must also be an ability to use knowledge and to organise and develop ideas within the tradition of formal prose.

35 This was a popular question, and many candidates produced answers that received high marks. The best answers were able to mention specific musical features that were characteristic of jazz in the late 1920s, and many focused on aspects of instrumentation and style that marked out the work of Morton especially. Less strong answers tended to open with an extended history of the early development of jazz, frequently linked to the conditions experienced by black musicians in the early 1900s. These essays tended to lack a sufficiently strong focus on the aspects that made *Black Bottom Stomp* typical of its time.

36 This was a very popular question and most candidates demonstrated some awareness of the most obvious contrasts between the rôle of the solo trumpet in the music of Haydn and Miles Davis.

The best answers pointed out the differences between Haydn's use of trumpet as a virtuoso soloist pitted against the full orchestra and contrasted this with Davis' integration of the solo trumpet as one member of a smaller instrumental ensemble. Less strong answers struggled to find evidence to compare the two works successfully and tended to be balanced heavily in favour of either Haydn or Davis.

Examiners were surprised that so many candidates continued to demonstrate either a lack of awareness or a degree of confusion when discussing the design of the trumpet used by each composer. Many Examiners found it astounding that so many scripts referred to Haydn's writing for a valved (rather than keyed) trumpet. Such comments revealed a lack of careful preparation for this Unit.

37 A small number of candidates attempted this question, but in general answers were convincing and demonstrated a strong awareness of the ways in which Schubert and Weber made use of the woodwind section of the orchestra. Candidates generally found plenty to write about in discussing Weber's orchestration (although relatively few answers mentioned the effectiveness of low clarinet register in the "Samiel" music), but found less detail to draw upon in relation to Schubert's symphony. Examiners found this surprising when Schubert gives so much significant musical material to woodwind instruments at significant focal points in the first movement of his symphony.

38 The best answers to this question demonstrated strong awareness of the conditions in which each work would have been performed. Many candidates were able to provide detail relating to both "classical" and jazz repertoire, while less convincing answers tended to concentrate on one work only. While many candidates displayed some awareness of the "aristocratic" elements typical of Haydn's Viennese audiences, some answers embarked on long descriptions of musical patronage, ignoring the fact that the *Trumpet concerto* dates from after Haydn's period of employment at Esterháza. Similarly, answers that concentrated exclusively on live performances by Miles Davis ignored the significance of *So What* as a musical art form produced in a studio and accessed indirectly by listeners via the medium of the radio broadcast or the LP record.

- 39** Very few candidates chose to answer this question, but in general answers revealed an awareness of the sound of each recording. Most candidates were able to identify musical features that were characteristic of each artist's style, and the best answers compared the contrasting approaches to instrumental sonority within similar overall structural patterns. Many candidates were able to demonstrate ways in which Morton and Ellington were able to craft their compositions to exploit the performing talents and specific instrumental techniques developed by the key soloists with whom they worked. Perceptive candidates were also able to mention significant aural effects, such as the use of low brass and reed scoring, or the parallel saxophone writing that is characteristic of Ellington's work.

Teacher Tips for Section C

- **DO provide candidates with opportunities to organise their ideas in practice 'essays' before the examination itself.**
- **DO explore aspects such as instrument development, the nature and composition of audiences, performing conditions and social and cultural background to the prescribed repertoire. Questions will test these aspects of learning regularly.**
- **DO NOT allow candidates to answer in this section by means of extended bullet points. This format is acceptable in Sections A and B, but in Section C answers must be in continuous prose.**
- **DO make use of the wealth of background material available on DVD and/or CD to provide contextual background on social and musical aspects of the prescribed repertoire.**

...and remember:

This is an A-level MUSIC course. Time spent listening attentively is NOT time wasted: intelligent background listening can be of enormous help to candidates in developing a sense of context for this section of the Unit.

2555 Historical and Analytical Studies

Examiners noted a disappointing level of achievement from many candidates this session. As in previous January sessions, the great majority of candidates were sitting the paper for the first time, and early, after just one term of A2 study and preparation. It was noticeable this year however that in many cases these candidates did not yet have the knowledge and skills to do really well. Some were able to show good, or even impressive aural skills in Section A, but did not yet have sufficient knowledge of the chosen topic in Section B, nor a real familiarity with the repertoire. Others wrote good essays in Sections B and C, but had not yet developed the aural skills needed to answer fully in Section A.

Having said that, there were as usual those candidates who did really well, and for whom another entry in June may not be necessary. Many other candidates should feel some satisfaction that they have tackled an A2 paper after a short time of preparation, and in doing so have learned what is expected and what remains to be done in the remainder of their course.

Section A

Extract 1

The extract using the Elgar part-song *The Wanderer* offered much scope for candidates to answer questions addressing the two Areas of Study: *Tonality* and *Words and Music*. Of these two, candidates were generally much more able to give good or full answers to questions on the response of the music to the text. Knowledge of tonality and the ability to identify features of harmony from the extract were weak from many candidates. Considering that the AS course focuses on Western Tonal Harmony, it was surprising that many candidates were unable to identify cadences in the tonic key, and for many it was clear that there was uncertainty over the key of the song.

- 1 Nearly all candidates gained one mark here, and many both marks. Fortunately there were three possible observations to be made for the two marks, for many who gained two marks were unable to identify the opening unison. Many answers stated that tenors and basses were in octaves, showing an elementary misunderstanding of tenor notation.
- 2 Only some candidates were able to identify plagal cadences, and to make the link with words in the text. Many assumed from the cadence in bar 4 that the key was D minor. However, most candidates achieved some credit here, and some went on to gain full marks.

Teachers' Tip

Candidates still need to be advised on how much detail they should give in short answers. The space provided and the marks available will give an indication of what is required. It is perfectly acceptable for these answers to be bulleted or in note form.

It is not unusual for some candidates, particularly strong ones, to write too much in the early questions of a paper in their enthusiasm, wasting time. In this session there was evidence that several candidates omitted Q.3 completely, as a result of writing so much in Q.2, continuing below the space provided, and obliterating Q.3 on the paper. They should still of course have noted the boxed cue for Q.3 above the empty bars in the Insert.

- 3 Most candidates gained some credit here, and a pleasing number gained 3 or 4 marks.
- 4 (a) This was very disappointing. Many answers gave details of vocal intervals, voice leading, and references to text setting. The aural evidence of modulations in a cycle of fifths could not have been clearer. If this was unfamiliar, then the correct identification of the keys from the evidence of the Insert would have achieved full marks. There were however complete answers given: some candidates gave *cycle of fifths* and named the first and last keys in the sequence, others named all the keys through which the sequence passes.
- (b) Answers were generally better here. Many candidates have been well prepared, and are on much firmer ground when explaining the link between musical features and text. Nearly all candidates were able to give full answers. Unfortunately, more than a few failed to restrict their answers to the bars required.
- 5 (a) This was generally not well done. Some candidates wrongly identified *Comparing* as the command word in the question, instead of *explain*, and went off on the wrong tack. Many others failed to address the point of the question: a comparison of structure.
- (b) Much better responses were given here, and many achieved all three marks.
- 6 As has become usual now in both January and June sessions, the answers to this standard question ranged from full accounts which showed a real familiarity with another work, to those offering no answer. It should be an easy matter for candidates to keep a listening log of music studied in their preparation for this Area of Study, including those works used in past papers.

Extract 2

This was generally better answered, with candidates showing a more confident ability to understand what is happening in a piece of 'unseen' music.

- 7 As well as the marching and military references in the music, several candidates went on to mention the melodic and harmonic features in the writing which anticipate the soldier's discomfort, as mentioned in the narration.
- 8 Here, too, full credit was achieved by many.
- 9 The denser texture, louder dynamics, and higher pitch of the clarinet were mentioned by many candidates as evidence of contrast with the rest of the extract.
- 10 (a) As usual, there were many candidates for whom a degree of dissonance must signal the use of atonality, but there was a good number who were able to identify the bitonality in this music.
- (b) Nearly all candidates gained some credit here, mentioning the use of the voice as narration. Many noticed the alternating pattern between voice and fuller instrumental passages, and some correctly identified the rhythmic relationship between narration and instrumental writing.

Section B

Topic 1

11 was the most popular in this topic, and although all answers for this period would have benefited from an ability to show a closer familiarity with repertoire, the marks gained were generally good or better.

Topic 3

17 attracted some good answers, with candidates able to identify features of Romanticism, and to refer to relevant music. This was usually lieder, with very few references to opera. Few considerations of the importance of the development of tonality in the period were found in answers.

Topic 4

22 was the most popular, not only in this topic but for the whole Section. Unfortunately, although candidates were for the most part able to give an adequate, or even thorough, account of the musical techniques found in *West Side Story*, virtually none could refer to an earlier stage musical as the question required. It is some time now since the dates of this period were changed in order to allow candidates to study musicals earlier than the Bernstein and to put the innovations in his work into context.

Topic 5

24 was well answered by some, able to give specific and direct references from songs to support their knowledge. **25**, too, was well attempted: although no answer reached the top mark band, none was lower than the 'good/general' level.

Section C

All questions were popular here, with **26** and **30** being the most popular.

The standard of response was generally good, or very good, with some achieving very high marks.

A good number of candidates were able to make a range of pertinent points, showing themselves to be experienced, and thoughtful musicians; but even these did not always satisfy the rubric to this section, and support their knowledge and views with references to music.

Overall, then, this was a rather mixed experience this session. Whilst it is clear that many candidates were in for a dry run, and had some way yet to go to do themselves justice, there was much evidence from many to indicate much progress already made, and obvious potential, given more study and preparation before the summer session.

Grade Thresholds

**Advanced GCE Music 3872/7872
January 2008 Examination Series**

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
2552	Raw	100	70	63	56	49	42	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
2555	Raw	100	74	66	58	51	44	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0

Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (ie after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
3872	300	240	210	180	150	120	0
7872	600	480	420	360	300	240	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total Number of Candidates
3872	22.0	42.0	64.0	84.0	100	100.0	53
7872	0.0	66.7	66.7	100.0	100.0	100.0	11

64 candidates aggregated this series

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see;
http://www.ocr.org.uk/exam_system/understand_ums.html

Statistics are correct at the time of publication

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

OCR Customer Contact Centre

14 – 19 Qualifications (General)

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

www.ocr.org.uk

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored

Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations
is a Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England
Registered Office; 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU
Registered Company Number: 3484466
OCR is an exempt Charity

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
Head office
Telephone: 01223 552552
Facsimile: 01223 552553

© OCR 2008

